

## Welcome to the Special Clinical Studies Unit (SCSU): 5 North East-South

Welcome to the NIH Clinical Center's Special Clinical Studies Unit (SCSU). The SCSU is a 7-bed patient care unit with 3 double-occupancy rooms and 1 single-occupancy room. There are several reasons why research participants are admitted to this unit. These include participants in vaccine studies, as well as those whose health condition requires a higher level of isolation. You will receive a tour of the unit when you are admitted.

The nursing staff put this welcome packet together to give you information about your stay with us, but please do not hesitate to ask any other questions you may have. Due to the variety of studies that take place on this unit, some information in this packet may not apply to you. Upon admission the nurse assigned to care for you will review this information with you to make sure you understand the procedures and policies specific to the SCSU.

### General Unit Information

Depending on why you are admitted to the SCSU, you may find that your experience here differs from those you may have had at other facilities. This unit has special air-flow systems to provide patients and staff with a continuous flow of filtered, clean air. Because of this, doors to patient rooms must stay closed as much as possible. Because of this unique air filtration system, this unit will feel cool. You may want to bring warmer clothes so that you are comfortable here.

Because some protocols may ask participants to stay for longer periods of time, this unit has

certain amenities not found in other units. These amenities include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Common area equipped with large-screen television
- ▶ Kitchen area for food preparation and storage
- ▶ Workout room with treadmill and stationary bike
- ▶ Washer and dryer for patient use
- ▶ DVDs, magazines and other entertainment

The SCSU is divided into two sections: the patient care area and the nursing station. While some protocols may require nursing staff to remain mostly outside of the patient care area, you will be able to see the nurses involved in your care through the windows in the nurses station, and you will be able to communicate with them via phone intercom. In these instances, the nurses and other medical staff maybe required to wear protective equipment such as masks, gloves and gowns when providing direct care.

### Privacy and safety

Cameras are placed throughout the public areas of the unit to assist staff monitor patients in some types of isolation. Closed-circuit cameras placed in the hallway, exercise room, common room and private isolation room allow the nursing staff to ensure your safety at all times. There are no cameras in the double-occupancy patient rooms, and your privacy is respected and protected at all times during you stay.

Please do not bring large amounts of money, jewelry, or other important items with you on the unit. If you do need to keep certain items with you, we ask that you store them in the safe provided to you in your room.

### Leaving the unit

The ability for you to leave the SCSU will depend on the research protocol you are enrolled in, as well as your current health condition. For example, certain protocols may require patients to stay on the unit for the entire study regardless of tests required, while others do not. It is very important that before leaving the unit you check with your nurse to confirm you are not on a protocol that limits your movements and that you do not have a procedure scheduled.

Please be aware you may be asked to wear gloves, gown and mask if you do leave the unit. This protects both you, and other people in the Clinical Center. Your nurse can answer your questions about scheduling time off the unit.

### Nursing care

The SCSU nursing staff received special training to provide care to patients who need different levels of isolation. Staff members are skilled in caring for those exposed to who are ill from infectious agents. In addition to ensuring that you get the highest standard of care, the nursing staff must collect protocol-related information. This information includes but is not limited to:

- ▶ Obtaining vital signs, which include temperature, pulse, respiratory rate, blood pressure, height and weight.
- ▶ Collecting laboratory samples. This may include blood, urine, phlegm, or other samples.
- ▶ Coordinating diagnostic tests to be completed within the SCSU or elsewhere in the Clinical Center.

Please talk to your nurse about any concerns you might have during your stay, as well as anything you do not understand or need regarding your care. Because certain protocols require very strict schedules for tests and procedures, it may be necessary to schedule meals or other activities around these appointments. Please let the nursing staff know about your special needs so that they can better accommodate your requests.

### Visitors

All visitors must wash their hands before and after entering a participant's room. At times, visitors to the SCSU may be required to wear items such as masks and gloves prior to entering the unit. Just as some protocols may limit a participant's ability to leave the unit, other protocols may limit the ability for visitors to enter the unit. Your nurse will explain the visitor policy specific to your protocol at time of admission.

### Recreation and activity

Whether you stay with us for a short time or for an extended study, the SCSU

offers several entertainment and activity options. The common room has a large-screen television with cable, and DVDs are available from the NIH Patient Library upon request. The exercise room is equipped with a treadmill, a stationary bike, and a flat-screen television. Each patient bed is outfitted with a personal television, and internet access is available. Reading material may be found in the common area.

### Meals

During your stay, there may be times when you cannot leave the unit for meals, so the hospital's Nutrition Department will deliver meals to you. When you need room service, simply call 301-451-FOOD (301-451-3663) from 6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Your meal will arrive on the unit within 45 minutes of ordering. Bag lunches are available upon request after 6:30 pm.

Your protocol may restrict the types of foods you are able to eat, so you are encouraged to check with your nurse prior to eating foods obtained outside of the Clinical Center. A refrigerator is available in the common area for your use should you need to save food for later. Juice and crackers are available from nursing staff upon request.

### Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any building on the NIH campus, including the Hatfield Center. Smoking is also banned on all patient care units and throughout the building, including stairwells and parking garages. Smoking is also prohibited within 100 feet of all entrances and hospital smoke free zones. Please let your nursing

staff members know if you have any concerns regarding these policies.

### Frequently requested information

- ▶ Unit telephone number: 301-496-6170
- ▶ Long-distance calls:

To place a long-distance call from your bedside phone, press 9-1-area code-telephone number.

- ▶ Patient Library: 301-451-7603

Hours:

Monday - Thursday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Friday - Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- ▶ Outpatient Pharmacy: 301-496-2866
- ▶ ATM locations

Main Level, near the North Entrance to the Clinical Center.

Second Floor of the Clinical Center, near the Cafeteria.

B1 Level of the Clinical Center, near the NIH Credit Union Branch.

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This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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Questions about the Clinical Center?  
<http://www.cc.nih.gov/comments.shtml>

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